



Christmas

Lotus

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THE LOTUS. ❀❀❀❀❀

Edited by Walter Blackburn Harte.

Under the Art Direction of Alfred Houghton Clark.

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A RÉSUMÉ AND A PROPHECY.

THE LOTUS, under the new management of the past year, has shown constant improvement in its art and make-up, and in its literature. An interesting experiment has grown, with care and earnest purpose and good judgment, into the most serious and important factor in the West in the new movement for a free and individual expression in American literature. A year ago the character of THE LOTUS was somewhat a dubious quantity in readers' minds, though it was amusing and attractive. It was considered in some quarters to lean toward the Decadent in mood, but when it passed into the present hands, its actual aims and character were at once made apparent, and it was immediately received by bookmen and all lovers of good literature all over the country with the most gratifying appreciation. Its constituency is not confined to the West, although it makes one of its paramount interests the encouragement of fresh talent in unexpected quarters, but is expanding all the time to embrace the reading public of the whole country. And its circulation is not entirely confined to America, for, as it is one of the very few periodicals of a distinctively American character, it excites more interest in England, and among American residents in Continental cities, than other American periodicals which simply reek of foreign interests and themes, and neglect the American writer almost to the point of ignoring his existence.

In spite of the prolonged depression in business, THE LOTUS has succeeded in awakening a new enthusiasm for a good high standard of art and creative and critical literature, which shall find its inspiration in an American locale, in American life and conditions, and shall be treated by the younger American writers, who are ambitious to put earnestness and sincerity and vigor into their work. After the decades of perfectly sapless and hollow, unreal literature, which have extinguished all original impulse in America, a new era is dawning. It comes partly from foreign influences—the French naturalists and realists, Ibsen and the Scandinavian and modern German school, and the English so-called "Decadent school"—and partly from a stirring of audacity and rebellion on the ground here, which is an indication of a deepening sense of culture in the new generation, and a growing impatience with shoddy substitutes for the true spirit of literature. This is the underlying purpose of THE LOTUS, incidental to the primary aim of gaining the sympathies and good-will of all readers, who enjoy a good human story, appreciate the charm of good literature, and desire to be amused, but not debauched, either morally or intellectually. The immediate response to our efforts to make this periodical characteristic of the American idea and spirit, exclusively, encourages us to persist in this campaign of creating a group of capable and entertaining and distinctive American writers for an American audience. So long as the public continues the favors shown to us during the year 1896

we shall feel that we are justified in our belief that it is not talent that is lacking in America, but

opportunities for its development. Thus we confidently promise a programme of sustained interest and growing power of performance for the year 1897.

There is a great satisfaction in looking back over the doubts of 1896, and reviewing the illiberal prejudice against bibelot publications on account of their form, to thank our large and growing constituency for the sturdy support, and in many instances deep personal interest, it has lent the venture on its purely literary merits, its unique character, and its absolute and unswerving honesty in criticism. THE LOTUS has succeeded in gaining a strong hold upon the regard of all critical readers and bookmen, and it has done this without the glamor of mere reputations, or imported English sensations, but by careful and catholic selection from the best and most promising of the younger American writers—from the East and West. It is its really unique distinction of being the only American periodical in America—the rest are all filled with an alien atmosphere, and a literature out of all touch and sympathy with the movements and characteristics of American life and social conditions.

THE LOTUS will present new names, new ideas, new features, and new opinions this coming year—but it will always continue to be "the American bibelot" of American literature. As such it will surely be filed in all bibliomaniacs' libraries as documentary evidence of the American faculty for literature—wit, humor, and invention. It is possible we may not present many "celebrities," and so we shall not call the roll, but we shall print a lot of good and amusing, and perhaps incidentally instructive, literature by men and women who know how to write.

The Editor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Title-page and index to Vol. II. of THE LOTUS will be sent to any address upon application.

Vol. II., bound in buckram, flexible boards, with lettering and ornamentation, will be expressed to any address in the United States for \$1.60.

Bound volumes will be exchanged for the eight unbound copies of Vol. II., if in good condition, for \$0.75, the purchaser paying charges both ways.

Covers will be forwarded by mail for \$0.60.

The publishers renew the offer of one year's subscription for one copy of either No. 1 or No. 2 of Vol. I.

To any one sending THREE NAMES with accompanying draft or money-order for \$3.00, THE LOTUS will be given FREE for one year, beginning with Vol. III., January 1, 1897.

BALLADE OF THE TENTH MUSE.

EDWARD W. BARNARD.

*"Be thou the Tenth Muse; ten times more in worth
Than those old Nine which rhymers invoke!"*

—*Shakespeare, Sonnet.*

Not in the Heaven-girt house of Jupiter,
Him who begat the worshipt, tuneful Nine,
Is there an one that I, at point of spur
Or stretched on rack, would own as muse of mine,
Though in her charms she rivalled Proserpine,
In wisdom, Pallas. I refuse
Else than a dark-eyed mortal to enshrine,
And, sweetheart, *thou* wilt be my muse.
Erato, once did I love fondly her,—
She was inconstant as the April shine!
Urania, star-crowned, did nathless err,
Who wed with Bacchus, reek'ng of his wine.
And Clío whispered me a tearful line,
Her gore-dipped quill would have me use:
Ah! brighter inspiration 's that of thine,
And—sweetheart, thou *wilt* be my muse?
Theirs be the palm, the laurels, and the myrrh:
The lute, the flute, and services condign.
Thou shalt have violets and lavender,
And hyssop sweet, and white-bell'd honey-bine
Those night-black, willful tresses to confine:
A homage paid thee that renews
With each new day, nor fails at youth's decline;
And, sweetheart, thou wilt be my *muse*.
My love, thou art, as sweethearts are, divine;
Yet more the rhymers-swain pursues:
A power to invoke; a muse in fine,
And, sweetheart, thou wilt be *my* muse!

A HERALD OF SORROW.

HUBERT HENRY DAVIES.



IN the cheerful light of a crimson-shaded lamp three generations were gathered. On either side of the blazing yule-log sat a young widow and her father, a clergyman of formal cut. Pulling aside the curtain and peeping through a corner of the window stood a little girl six years old, looking out upon the waste of snow that glittered under the starlit sky. Her head was full of children's dreams as she listened to the

A HERALD OF SORROW.

jangling sleigh-bells, dreams of the child Christ, of the angels' song, of Christmas-trees and Santa Claus.

"I don't think it does any harm," the young mother was saying, "to tell them that Santa Claus brings their presents; it is a pretty fancy and so universal."

"It is inconsistent with the Christian profession," her father answered. "It is teaching them to believe a lie. Lies, my dear Adeline, are sometimes beautiful."

"Well, perhaps it is better to tell Esther," the mother said, complacently, "for, now I come to think of it, I could never cram those toys I bought into one of her tiny stockings. Esther, dear, come here."

The little girl came to her mother's knee; the firelight shone on her soft dark eyes and short brown curls.

"Esther, I think you are getting too big to hang up your stocking on Christmas-eve."

"But Santa Claus wouldn't know where to lay my presents," the little girl said.

Her mother smiled at her guilelessness. "It is not Santa Claus who brings your presents, it is your mother who puts them there."

"Not Santa Claus?" the little girl said in childish wonderment.

"There is no Santa Claus," her grandfather said.

"No Santa Claus?" she repeated, looking from one to the other with large serious eyes.

Her mother drew her to her knee and told her it was all a sham; that no Santa Claus had ever come speeding from the far north with toys for her at Christmas-time; that, were she to try ever so hard to stay awake, she would never hear his sleigh-bells, nor see him enter her room softly in the dead of night with his long white beard and wreath of glistening holly. The little girl listened to it all, at first bewildered and then sad. She said nothing, and when her bed-time came she kissed her mother and her grandfather and went away with her nurse, the short brown curls falling round her serious little face.

At midnight the young widow went to Esther's room to lay the toys and books beside her bed. She looked at the little face asleep on the pillow; there were tears on the round baby cheek.

"Ah, poor little one!" the mother said; "you have been crying because your pretty dream has fled. It is your first illusion lost; there are many more."



THE MAD MUSICIAN. POST WHEELER.

A harp would I—a harp whose touch,
In sunlight, star-fire, glamour'd dusk,
Would prick my senses fine as musk,
Whose voice would charm me overmuch.

It must be strung all cunningly,
Its cords fine-wove and music-mad,
Like her dark hair that made me glad
To singing when I wound it free.

Its frame a marvel would I make,
Fair-formed and rounded as is best,
Like the full curves that formed her breast
To thrill such cadence when she spake.

On harp deft-fashioned tone to tone,
Ah me, what music would I dare!
Whose strings were twist of her rich hair,
And its frame carved of her breast-bone.

ON THE TANTRAMAR DYKE.

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.



The wind blew hard across the marshes of Tantramar and across the open bay. The yellow waters of the bay were driven into long, white-crested waves. The deep green grass of the marshes was bowed in rushing, pallid lines. From the marshes the water was fenced back by ramparts of dyke, following the curve of the shore. The dyke was clothed with a sparse, gray-green wind-whipped herbage. Along its narrow top ran a foot-path, irregularly worn bare. Following this path went a tall young woman with a yellow-haired child at her side. The wind wrapped roughly her bluish-gray homespun skirt about her knees, making it hard for her to walk; and the child, a little boy perhaps two years old, kept pulling back upon her grasp from time to time, to catch at wind or grass-top, or to push the blown curls out of his eyes. The woman grasped him securely, lest the wind should buffet him off the dyke, but to his babbling and his laughter she paid no heed. Her eyes held a grave sorrow that went curiously with so young a face; and her red lips, full but firm, were compressed as if in bitter retrospection. Like the child, she wore no hat upon the rich masses of her hair, but a blue-and-white calico sun-bonnet, crisply ironed, hung by its strings from her arm.

In the sheltered mouth of a creek some hundreds of yards behind these two figures a boat was coming to land. It came from a brig which lay at anchor under the lee of a high point, half a mile further down the shore. Two sailors pulled upon the oars. In the stern sat a young fellow with an air of author-

ity which proclaimed him at least first mate or second. In spite of his dignity, however, there was a boyish zest in his eyes. A mop of light hair, longer than is usually affected by seamen of English speech, came down upon his red and sturdy neck, and suggested that he had been sojourning long among foreigners. But in his face was the light of a glad home-coming. Eagerly he sprang to land as the boat touched the little wharf. With a shade of irresolution, he cast a quick glance up and down the shore. Then, muttering under his breath an exclamation of surprise and delight, he climbed the dyke, and made haste in pursuit of the woman and the child.

The wind was in their ears; the wind-beaten grass was thick and soft on the dyke-top, and they did not hear his hurrying footsteps. When he was yet half a dozen paces behind them, he called out "Libby!"

Like a flash the woman turned, starting as if the sound of his voice had stung her, and her hands went up to her bosom. As her eyes rested upon him a hot flush spread over her comely young face. Her lips quivered an instant, then set themselves in stern and bitter lines. Turning on her heel without a syllable, she resumed her way. The child, who had clutched her knee in alarm at the strange voice, she kept hold of by the hand, so that now, the dyke being narrow, there was no room for another to walk beside her.

The man scanned ardently her trim, tall figure, and the heavy, red-brown coil of hair which drooped low upon her neck. His eyes danced as they fell upon the child. His hands went out as if they would snatch the little fellow to his lips, but he checked the impulse.

"Libby," he repeated, in a tone of mingled confidence and coaxing, "I've come back to make it all right to you—an' the boy! I jest *couldn't* git here no sooner!"

His words fell unheeded, except that the boy half turned a smiling face and babbled shyly at him.

"Libby," he repeated anxiously, the confidence fading out of his voice, "won't ye speak to a feller?" and after hesitating a moment for response, he stepped forward and grasped her arm appealingly.

She caught her breath, and he thought she was going to relent; but the next instant, dropping her hold upon the child, she swung around the other arm and struck him fiercely across the face with her open hand.

He fell back a pace or two, and stared about him foolishly, as if he thought someone on the distant ship or in the upland village might have seen his discomfiture. He felt furtively at his smarting lips, and was on the point of laughing, but changed his mind. His brows creased themselves in anxious concern, and for a good five minutes he walked behind the woman without a word. The problem he was facing grew suddenly very serious in his eyes. He had always had a vague consciousness that Libby was in some way different from the other girls of his little fishing-village; but this perception had become obscured to him in the hour when he found that she actually returned his love and could be melted

by his passion. Now, however, the feeling returned to him with new force. Being a young man, he had been wont to flatter himself that he knew the "women-folks" through and through; but now he tasted a sensation of doubt and diffidence.

At length, coming up close behind her, that the wind might not blow his words away, he began very humbly.

"Won't ye try to fergive me, Libby?" he pleaded. "I mean square, I do, so help me God. If ye knowed how I've been ahungerin fer a tech of yer hand, all this long v'yage, ye'd maybe not think so hard o' me. I ain't never cared fer no other girl but you—never really cared. I always hev wanted jest you, an' now I want ye that powerful I can't begin to tell ye—you an' the boy—the little lad—what's asmiling at me now, ef his mother won't.

He paused to see if his words were producing any effect, and seeing none, he went on yet more anxiously, while the furrows deepened in his forehead.

"An' now I'm agoin' to do the right thing by you an' the little lad"—here the resentment darkened in the woman's face, but he could not see it—"an' ef ye'll come to the minister with me this day, I lay out to never let ye repent it. Freights is low, an' I kin stay home the rest of the summer, an' I've brought ye back a tidy little lump of money in my—"

But at mention of the money the woman faced about and confronted him with such hot indignation that he was too bewildered to finish his sentence. She opened her mouth to speak, but only uttered a sob, and in spite of herself the tears broke from her eyes. Dashing the corner of her apron across her face, she turned and walked on more hastily than before.

The man looked discouraged, then impatient, then determined. But he continued more humbly than ever.

"I know I done wrong, I know I was a mean sneak to leave ye in the lurch the way I done that spring, Libby. But I couldn't help it—kind of. Stidder comin' right back here from New York an' marryin' ye, like I'd laid out to do, honest, I had to ship in a barquentine of Purdy's that was loadin' for Bonus Ayrs. An' then we went round up the Chili coast way up to Peru fer nitrates. An' there bein' war between Chili an' Peru, an' the Chilians offerin' good pay, I listed an' saw it through, an' so—"

As an explanation this was all so awkward and glaringly insufficient that the girl was excited out of her reserve. Again she turned, and this time she spoke.

"Jim Calligan," said she fiercely, "You are lyin' to me right along. You *couldn't help* leavin' me to my shame, eh? What kind of talk's that fer a *man*? Why don't you say right out that, havin' had all you wanted of me, you jest didn't care *what* become of me, an' you jest shipped yerself off fer Bonus Ayrs as the easiest way of gittin' quit of me? An'—an' I'd see me an' the—the babe, both of us, starve to death afore I'd tech a cent of your money."

She ended in a fresh burst of noiseless tears, pulled the child close to her side, and walked on.

The man braced himself, as if about to use an argument which he would fain have avoided.

"Libby," said he, "I didn't want to tell ye the hull truth, but I reckon I've got to. Ye see, I cleared out to South Ameriky jest because, fer a while there, I thought as how the babe—wasn't agoin' to be mine."

She had turned again, and was gazing at him with a look that made him feel ashamed to lift his face; but he went on.

"As true as I'm astandin' here, Libby, I believed it, an' it nigh killed me, I tell you. The way it come, I couldn't *help* believin' it. But three months back I found out as how I'd been deceived, and that jest made me so glad, I never thought half enough about the wicked wrong I'd been doin' ye all this time. I was in—"

"Who told you such a wicked, wicked lie?" interrupted the woman.

"Pete Simmons," said he simply.

"And you let him?" she demanded, with eyes flaming.

"Not much—that is, not exactly," said the man. "It was all in a letter his sister writ him."

"What, Martha, that died last spring?" she asked eagerly.

"The very same," said he. "And Pete didn't believe it at first, no more 'n I did. *Pete* was all right, an' advised me as how I'd oughter write ye about it an' clear it all up. But Marthy's letter looked so straight, bye and bye I didn't see how to get over it. She had it all down fine, how you'd been goin' with Jud Prescott behind my back; an' how Jud had as good as owned up to her about it, an' was powerful amused at the way you an' he was foolin' me. Marthy writ as how I was too fine a feller to be treated that way, an' she jest couldn't stand it. So then—"

"Well, what then?" asked the woman in a hard voice, as he hesitated.

"Then, fer a while, I didn't care ef I died; an' I went away to South Ameriky."

"An' what's brought ye back now?" she inquired, in the same hard voice.

"When Marthy was on her death-bed she writ to Pete, tellin' him she'd lied about ye, all on account—on account of a kind of a hankerin' she had fer me," explained the man, with a self-conscious hesitation. "An' oh, Libby!" he continued, in a burst of eager passion, "my heart's *achin'* fer ye, an' I do so want the little lad, an' *can't* ye try an' fergive me all the wrong ye've suffered through me?"

The expression on the woman's face had undergone a change—but she did not choose to let him see her face just then. She looked across the marshes, and out on the flooding tide, and wondered what made the picture so glowingly beautiful, even like her childhood's memories of it. Her very walk became unconsciously softer and more yieldingly graceful. But she was determined not to pardon him too quickly. Without turning her face, she declared emphatically:

"Jim Calligan, ef ye was the only man in the world, I

wouldn't marry ye. Don't ye dare to lay a finger on me, or I'll fling the boy an' myself both into the bito yonder."

The aboideau, or, as the fisher-folk of the neighborhood were wont to call it, the "bito," was a place where the dyke, here become a lofty and massive embankment, crossed a small creek or tidal stream. The essential feature of an aboideau is its tide-gates, so arranged as to give egress to the fresh waters of the creek, while not admitting the great tides of the bay to drown the marshes. The gates of this aboideau, however, were out of repair, and most imperfectly performed their functions. The deep basin behind the dyke was half filled with the pale water of the creek, though which boiled up a furious yellow torrent where the tide was forcing an entrance.

In a moment or two they were on top of the aboideau. The man was silent in something like despair, deeming his case almost hopeless at the very moment when the woman was wondering how she could most gracefully capitulate. She half turned her face, being much moved to look at him and judge from his countenance as to whether she had punished him enough. At this instant a splendid red-and-black butterfly hovered close before the child's eyes, and settled on a milk-weed top, just over the edge of the dyke. The child slipped from his mother's grasp, reached eagerly out to catch the gorgeous insect, and tumbled headlong into the seething turmoil of the basin.

Uttering a faint cry of horror, the woman made as if to spring in after him. But the man grasped her roughly, thrust her back, and cried in a voice of abrupt command, "Stay there!"

Then he plunged to the rescue.

As the little one came to the surface, the man grasped him. A few powerful strokes brought them to the shore; and he was already struggling up the slippery steep with his burden as the woman, who had scrambled down the dyke and run along the brink, paused in the bordering grass and stretched out both hands to help him.

Without a word, he put the dripping, sobbing little form into her arms. She snuggled it to her bosom, devouring the wet and frightened face with her lips. Then she handed the child back to him, saying:

"Seems to me ye know how to take care of him, Jim!"

She was smiling at him through her tears in a way he could hardly fail to understand.

"An' of you too, Libby?" he pleaded, drawing her to him, so that he held both mother and child in the one clasp.

"May be, Jim, if ye're *quite* sure now ye want to," she assented, yielding and leaning against him.

And the wind piped on steadily above their heads; but there in the sun, under the shelter of the dyke, the peace was undisturbed.

ON THE
TANTRA-
MAR DYKE.



A REALIST—A STORY OF TO-DAY.

JOHN NORTHERN HILLIARD.



HE came into the room where he was writing, stealing softly on her tip-toes that he might not hear. She blind-folded his eyes with her hands, a smile of expectation lighting the girlish face.

The man paused in his work, and allowed his head to sink against the back of the chair.

"Laura?"

"Why, how did you guess, Dick?"

"Call it intuition, thought-transference, or what you please. I knew it was you. When did you come?"

"This minute. Your sister is in the sitting-room with that stupid young Robinson. Of course she had no eyes for me, so I thought I'd bother you awhile. Now, aren't you glad?"

"I am always glad to see you, Laura."

"Even when I—I interrupt?"

"Yes, even when you interrupt."

The woman's eyes sobered, and the lips budded to a pout.

"Well, you don't appear one bit glad. You are just as grim and sober as ever. Are all authors pessimists? I would give the world to see you smile just once. I wonder if there's nothing that can make you happy?"

"Nothing."

"Are you—you sure, Dick?"

"Oh, yes; quite certain. I am as happy, perhaps, as any one whose three graces are poverty, ambition, and failure."

"What are you writing, Dick?"

"Only a short story. They seem to be in demand. I call it 'Atavism.' Its general scheme is not unlike that sketch of mine in the last 'Budget.' By the way, you haven't told me what you think of it?"

"It is detestable; the very worst thing you have done. It's not fit for anyone to read."

The man toyed with the pen-holder. His stern, ascetic features expressed a slight scorn as he replied:

"It is curious, Laura, how a man's success in life is gained through the efforts of strangers. If I had to rely upon my friends—"

"Dick!"

"I would still be wallowing in obscurity. The critics have been very kind to me. Through them I have been able to exist."

"Dick, you are blind, hopelessly blind. Do you know why the critics praise your stories?"

"Because they are real."

"No; it's because they are unreal. Your stories are monsters of untruth and morbidism, and they appeal to their jaded appetites. If I didn't know you so well, I would fancy you a creature of vice. Your work gives that impression. As it is, your mind is morbid and your imagination distorted. You

try to persuade yourself that all life is gloomy and miserable that every one has an unhealthy appetite. Your outlook is very narrow indeed."

A REALIST
—A STORY
OF TODAY.

"Your ideas are immaterial at the best, Laura. You have not lived, merely existed. No man or woman has really lived until they have felt the pain of sorrow, misery, and despair. You are young and inexperienced. You have been indulged in your whims; men have fawned like fools at your feet. You have been sought after, flattered, pampered, and you have lived only for these things."

"You are insulting, Mr. Morrison!"

"Yes; truth is usually an insult."

"I'll not quarrel, Dick; we are too old friends for that. But you do have strange ideas."

"Explain."

"Well, for one thing, you say happiness can not exist."

"Yes. We often delude ourselves that there is such a mental condition."

"And love?"

The man gave an impatient gesture.

"Love? Bah! that is the string eternally harped upon by the poet and sentimentalist. The word has grown mawkish and ludicrous with age and abuse. Love is a synonym of dishonesty. It is the threadbare garment that would cloak hypocrisy. Man's main object in life is other than the pursuit of some woman. His fate hangs upon something more tangible and human than an idle 'yes' or 'no.'"

"Is a woman's love to be despised?"

"You misunderstand me. I merely mean that it is time for silly sexual problems to be solved. Life should begin on newer and broader lines. Men and women should learn to respect each other, and what is vaguely called love will be found to be only a higher and purer ideal of friendship."

"Are you great enough an iconoclast, my friend, to destroy at a blow the growth of ages?"

"It is not a growth; it is a tradition. Tradition is the most virulent foe of the reformer. Men have had their souls singed at the stake because they dared to spit in the face of tradition."

"You use brave words."

"Only what my inner self warrants. More crimes have been committed, more women wronged in the name of love than can ever be atoned. Sentiment is a sweet syrup that soon rots."

"In your philosophy there would be no marriage."

"On a different basis. I conceive marriage as merely a means to an end. The idea of a woman losing her identity in that of her husband is happily becoming discarded. Woman is no longer a mere machine, to bear children regularly and become a household drudge."

"A woman's delight is her home."

"That's the conventional idea. Life is not to be bounded by mere sensual wants. There is a deeper and nobler side that should be fathomed."

"You mean the—"

**A REALIST
—A STORY
OF TODAY.**

"Spiritual. Men and women should mate not for mere gratification, but for the purpose of helping each other toward a common goal. There should be an object in life to require the assistance of each."

"Ah, Dick! you are inconsistent, like most men. You claim to be a realist, but you are now indulging in altruistic dreams."

"Your point is not well taken, Laura. The realist, as a matter of fact, is the greatest of dreamers. By portraying things as they actually exist he suggests what ought to be. He builds far better than the idealist."

"I hardly think I understand you, Dick."

"You don't now; you will—some day."

"What is your object in life? Be as frank with yourself as you were with me."

"I only wish to be remembered as a man who did his work with the weak mental machinery at his command. I do not care what I am called. Classification does not count. The great thing to be desired is the quality of personal honesty. To be true to myself, my convictions, is all I ask."

"And do you need no assistance in the fight?"

"No, Laura; I will fail as it is. I can only grope along the best I may. I have no hope for ultimate success. What is there that can help me?"

"Oh, Dick! Dick, let me help you." She put out her arms. "I love you," she went on impulsively, "and I have enough money so that you need not grind for a living. You can write at your leisure, and you may become famous. Think of that, Dick!"

The man rose from his chair and took the girl's hand in his. "You must not talk like that, Laura."

"Dick! Oh, Dick! don't you care for me?"

"Hush, dear! Sister is calling. I would not come again if I were you. Good-bye."

The door closed and the man resumed his writing.

BY THEIR WORKS.

CLAUDE F. BRAGDON.

A man, not of the common clay,
But who had dreamed his life away,
Conscious of kinship with the great,
Knocked fearlessly at Heaven's gate.
Admitted there, he straightway caught
The circle of those minds whose thought
Had been his own. . . . Not recognized
By those whose company he prized,
Disconsolate, he went away,
And then he heard an angel say:

"Here, as on earth, you find yourself alone,
Because by *works*, not thoughts, the man is known."

THE ROVER'S STAVE.

FRANK MARKWARD.

*The schooner rocks in our island bay,
Our men line the glistening sand.
The feast-fires burn the night away,
The wild songs hail the coming day—
The songs of the pirate band.*

O, black is our flag with its grinning skull
And its waving bleaching bones,
The flag that swings o'er the pirate's hull,
And cursed by all for a scuttling trull
That 's bound for Davy Jones.

O, rank and dank is our vessel's hold,
And reeks in its charnel smell
With dead men's blood and their lifted gold
That came where the washing ocean rolled
And hissed round our floating hell.

The barnacles cling with a thousand maws,
And live in the sea-green scum
That lines her sides where she dips and draws,
And the creaking rudder rives and yaws,
As it steers to Kingdom Come.

Then ho for life to a hell-bent port!
Set every sail to the blast!

High priests are we to the Devil's court,
And his dancing imps shall be our sport
When we sight Hell's dock at last.

Each glass to the brim! Pour down the wine!
Our life is free as the wave;

Drink to the dead 'neath the brown sea-brine!
Drink to the drift that his bones entwine!

Drink all, to a rover's grave!

THE DREAM-WOMAN.

LULAH RAGSDALE.



HE was really the most ambitious woman I ever knew. She looks happier now than she did then. Oh, but she was a self-torturer! tormented her poor soul with feeling and wanting and struggling all the time. Wanted success too fast—you know that kind."

"Has she ever gotten it? Never heard of her before."

"This picture is giving it to her fast enough. I had not heard any thing from her for years; knew she had been left a lot of money; maybe riches have contented her."

"She seems to have reached the epitome of languorous happiness here. A-a-h! it makes one yawn."

THE DREAM- WOMAN.

Ted Brotherton and his friend Ozaine took a few steps backward to get a new light on the picture that had created the furor of the Exhibition of '85.

Ted had heard of it through the newspapers. He had read the notices aloud to Ozaine last evening as they dined together.

"'Poppaea,' by Fulvia Follette—why that's my Fulvia, my old chum Fulvia! she was an artist, you know. You've heard me speak of her a hundred times; clever girl—I always believed in her. We must go and see the picture. By Jove! I am glad for her. Must write and congratulate her."

So they had come to-day to see it.

The afternoon light that sifted through the western window near it seemed to thicken the strange, still amber mist that steeped the picture. It was afternoon on that canvas; it might have been the light of the lotus-eater's eternal afternoon in which the artist's brush had been dipped. One knew that a tree grew somewhere off to the west, for its branches had gotten into the scene, and a ragged blot of its velvety shadow lay over the poppy-bed in the foreground.

The knee-deep, furze-soft plants—bursting on every side into flames of bloom—crowded the canvas; a stretch of vivid efflorescence that seemed to exhale the breath of sleep. Between the crimson heads of the highest of them, the head of a woman was lifted. Her long eyes looked sleepily out. Her delicate green gown showed in glimpses between the greener stems, giving a hint of her languorous pose along the grass. Her round arm—from the flexile wrist on the ground to the clasp of the classic garment above the shoulder—gleamed barely in an interstice between blossoms and leaves. Her coppery hair lit up with brassy lights where the sun flecked it; the narrow rim of her eyes, between their up-curved lashes, shot with yellow lights; a lazy, sybaritic half-smile just deepening the little indented corners of her mouth. That was all—but the seduction of it was perfect. One looked and felt a strong desire to go to sleep among the poppies. The smile of the woman, too, seemed to breathe the breath of a narcotic over the senses.

"Y-a-h! I'm half asleep. What could life offer better?" yawned Brotherton.

"Let us alone, life driveth onward fast, and in a little while our lips are dumb," murmured the poet, the contagion of inertia in his eyes. "Where does she live—this artist, Fulvia?"

"Louisiana—old country place; inherited it from an aunt almost four years ago."

"And this 'Poppaea' she has painted is her own portrait?"

"Oh, yes; Fulvia has given her own face to the woman in the picture, except it has here a different expression from any I ever saw it wear."

"Do you think she would let me make a poem about her? Ah! I have an idea—and use her face for the illustrations. You could give me a letter of introduction. It's for my 'Dream-Woman.'"

"What, the letter?"



"No, the living model—if she will consent. I would as soon go to Louisiana for September as to the 'Owl's Roost' with McIlvanie. It would be a good deal more profitable. I would work on my poem down there, and at McIlvanie's I would only hunt, of course."

"But the rest—you need that."

"Pshaw! there is no rest like honest interest in the work a man loves. I could get more real pleasure out of a well-turned couplet than bringing down a quail. The one's creating, the other destroying. It's nature to find a thrill in the act of creating."

"You're a fool—"

"Thanks."

"You're taken with Fulvia. I would be stronger."

"Thanks again," a little frigidly.

"I will give you the letter, of course. Don't get huffy. I don't understand you poets—take that for my apology. If Fulvia is anything like the Fulvia of old, you two will work one another up to white-boiling-point with both your restless, ambitious souls. I fear the contact; you are too much alike. You will be tearing the days up with your attempts to conquer the world in a month's time."

Ozaine looked critically at the woman in the picture.

"If she's that kind, she's not what I want for my 'Dream-Woman.' She doesn't look restless. I can't imagine her ambitious."

"I never saw her smile like that, nor hold her eyes so. Perhaps she has outgrown her old wants, now that she is rich. Go and see; you won't be satisfied until you do. I believe a poet would try to follow a star-ray to its source if he imagined an inspiration lay at its end."

"If she will only let me use her face for the illustrations of my book—"

Cleon still lingered wistfully beside the poppy picture.

Brotherton looked at him with a sudden idea.

"You are rather good-looking—black eyes to offset her amber ones—there is one way by which you could get full right to use her face and the world would only applaud. She is rich too; God bless you, my boy. I will send a couple of souvenir spoons—see the appropriateness? *spoons*, you see? you poets haven't much sense of humor, you know—for my bridal gift. God bless you, my children."

A fair, tall woman touched Ted's arm through a group of people, with the tip of her parasol, and her white teeth flashed as she smiled above the other women, to him.

"Jovel there's Sybil Austin—in the violet dress—handsome, isn't she? I am going—will you come and be introduced? Well, I'll meet you here in half an hour. What a delightful surprise! did not know you were back. For rehearsals? So soon? Going to be a disastrous season I hear, but that can't affect you. The true load-stone always attracts. Let's walk over and see that 'Eurydice' of Galbraith's. That is Cleon Ozaine, the poet—the tall, dark one; I was talking with him when I discovered you. He has just found a new



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ignis-fatuus to pursue. How unstable their desires are—poets! I prefer something more substantial.” He glanced admiringly at Miss Austin’s handsome plenitude of figure. “Yet he is a fine fellow—Ozaine; a great fellow.”

* * * * *

The poppy-beds were dry and brown in the yard at Marshmere on the last day in August, when Ozaine went to call on Fulvia. He had sent Brotherton’s letter of introduction out in the morning. In response she had invited him out to call on her that afternoon. With that curious reluctance that sometimes possesses sensitive souls at the very moment of the fruition of some carefully nurtured hope, Cleon lingered about paying the call. He delayed, while longing ardently to go, and when at last he did walk up between the trees and pass into the gray old mansion, it was later than one usually expects an afternoon caller in the country.

The drawing-room, rich and quaint, with all its antique furnituring, was vacant when he was shown into it. The negro footman evidently expected to find his mistress occupying it, for he looked about in surprise when he saw that she was not in. He motioned, with lofty grace, to a divan by one of the windows, and went out to look up Miss Follette. When he was gone, Cleon turned and parted the long, old-fashioned, satin-damask curtains, to look out into the grounds. The windows faced the east and opened on to a side veranda. It was cool and shadowy out there, and seemed to be fitted up as an idling-nook for some one; a woman most probably. A Persian prayer-rug, wrought in subdued colors, was spread upon the floor. An awning—now rolled up to admit the cool evening air—was swung where it could protect the spot from every fleck of the morning sun. A passion-vine interlacing a wild jasmine—the eating of whose golden blooms is death—made a green mist in the interstices between the fluted pillows. The passion-vine was frothed over with a white foam of faintly sweet flowers, but the time of the pungent jasmine’s blooming was long over. A tea-table was there, set with old china; and three or four wide wicker chairs, with cushions and head-rests of pale, dulled rose and blue silks, were scattered about. A book was open on the floor, and an easel, that was empty of any work, stood in a corner. Suspended from the ceiling by four brass chains was a kind of Indian hammock-couch, heavily padded, and covered with dull rose tapestry. It was piled with cushions, rose and old blue and reseda green. Among the pillows—her head against the green—the Poppaea of the painting was lying asleep. She had on a transparent white gown that hung in crisp, clear billows off the edge of the couch, and some lace, delicate as froth, seemed to effervesce from below it. The tip of a white shoe was sunk like a flower in the folds of a soft green covering that swung negligently off the lower end of the couch. The hair was rumpled and its waves were like the ripples one might make by stirring a vessel of molten metal.

The negro passed the drawing-room and went out upon the veranda. Cleon saw him approach this furnished nook.



He gently shook the couch by its chains, but its occupant slept on. He gave it a more forcible agitation and said in quick, low tones:

"Miss Fulvia! Miss Fulvia!"

There was no movement among the pillows. Inside the drawing-room Cleon smiled. He recalled Ted Brotherton's fears that they two would fret one another into a frenzy of work.

"I never saw a person of that temperament and those tendencies sleep so soundly nor so luxuriously—and in the daytime, too." He smiled. "She's decidedly of the exotic, indolent type, I judge."

Just then she stirred at the violent shaking of the nest. She looked up through half-opened lids, and if she had then smiled with more consciousness in the eyes, the "Poppaea" would have seemed an exact reproduction of her face.

"Well, what do you want?" she said, half asleep.

"The gentleman's come, Miss Fulvia; the one you was expecting. He's in the drawin'-room waitin'. Miss Fulvia! Miss Fulvia!" Poppaea was fast asleep again. The negro went into the house in dismay. A yellow woman, with a head turbaned in the old fashion of slavery days, presently came out. She took the girl by the shoulders and shook her with force. "Miss Fulvia, you must wake up, the gentleman's done come—the one you said you had given out. My Lord! Miss Fulvia, what 'll he think?"

Poppaea had set drowsily up among the pillows. She at last comprehended what the woman was saying.

"Oh, did he come, after all?" she said dreamily. "Yes, I am going. Is he in the drawing-room? No, open the windows wide and I will see him out here."

She put her hand to her ruffled hair, taking out and putting in again her amber hair-pins. She got off the swinging-couch and smoothed her gown. Then she sank lazily into a chair. The yellow woman shook the cushions and rearranged them on the couch.

"Have tea sent out," Fulvia said. The yellow woman came into the drawing-room and opened the windows to the floor. Cleon followed her through one of them and crossed the rug to Fulvia. She rose and held out her hand, smiling the languid, sweet smile of Poppaea in the picture.

"I am happy to meet you. Ted and I were such comrades in the old times. It is pleasant to know he has remembered me so long. I was not a merry companion; I worked too hard. He wrote me that you were a worker, too."

"He called me a dreamer, to my face."

"Dreaming is very hard work sometimes. It is wearing—especially if you want to fix your dreams—materialize them."

"I must thank you for doing the labor that crystallized one of yours. The 'Poppaea' gives me such absolute pleasure. One gets one's work-jarred nerves soothed by looking at it. The likeness is perfect."

"Do you find it so? I would have felt much more elation in the praise once."

"You have grown callous to it?"

THE
DREAM-
WOMAN.

**THE
DREAM-
WOMAN.**

"I have quit work; I do not care whether it is excellent or execrable now. The 'Poppaea' was only a passing fancy. How the idea of exhibiting it came to me I can't imagine. The passing thought of some idle moment, I suppose." She laughed quietly. Cleon thought she must still be sleepy. Her lashes seemed too heavy for her eyes and she sat with her hands drooping from her chair-arms, absolutely without motion. She brightened a little when tea was brought out, and served it to him with the subdued movements that seemed habitual to her. Cleon wondered if wealth could so enervate him.

The sun went down, and the cool evening air lifted the white-flowered vine and came in, scented from some tuberoses that grew somewhere in the grounds.

"Did Ted tell you what manner of woman I was when he knew me?" Fulvia was laughing again, as we laugh gently at the foolishness of some creature very dear to us. "What a wearing, restless thing, that imagined it had a great mission in life, and that it had to fight down all sorts of opposition to accomplish it?"

"He told me you were ambitious. You had reason to be ambitious, you see. Your work has proved that it was only that demand of the true spirit of art."

"I don't know. The results ought to have come sooner. Art delayed her tributes too long. Ambition sickened and died in the meantime. You did not have to wait long for recognition?"

"I have scarcely that now. But every failure sharpens my determination." There was almost fierceness in the poet's tone.

She lifted her eyes and looked wonderingly, then pityingly at him.

"What is the use?" she said with a low seductiveness in her voice.

"My Lord! what other use to live?"

"It is not essential after all. I used to feel just as you do. I would not suffer so again."

"You need not; you have reached success."

His restless and magnetic eyes glittered. A passing flash lit hers.

"Do you think all that I would do would be recognized now? But I could not hold out. Oh, think of all the work—day after day! no, I could not hold out." She laid her head back on her cushions and lapsed into listlessness again. "I am happy enough. Nothing could make me happier."

"What a fearful apathy she is in! almost like an enchantment. An ideal dream-woman. She is a wonderful study."

Cleon went back to the town and to his hotel lost in his reflections of her, affected by her influence and impatient for the next day. He was to dine with her by her invitation the next evening. It pleased Cleon to call her Poppaea afterwards. Her soft, sleepy ways fascinated him. He felt that she would not have been half so full of charm for him had she been restless and eager and full of her own endeavor. There was forgetfulness in her presence. Life seemed a dream when





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with her. One forgot what one had been striving so furiously to do. One wondered why one wanted to do anything but sit and dream and look softly into another's eyes and hear low laughter and lower sighs, and catch vague drifts of perfume from the slow movements of delicate garments, and watch the sun go down in royal splendor behind reaches of lovely land, and the white and violet and fire-gold stars burst out in flower-like bloom.

She was willing that Cleon should use her as a model for his Dream-Maiden; willing to lend him her face and form for the illustrations. Indeed, the idea seemed to give her infinite pleasure. As his poem took form out of the vague ideas of his brain, he read it to her. She lay in the Indian-couch or lolled in her big chairs during the afternoons, while he lulled her with the exquisite murmur of rhyme that had flowed off the point of his enchanted pen during the busy forenoons. They were both happy. He, after a time, grew to be happier than she. Perhaps his active nature energized her to an extent. At all events, there came to be moments when the languor died out of her eyes and she looked up at him with sharp flickerings of uncertain pain in her glance; when she grasped at a fold of her gown and crushed it in her hand. He caught her with this unrest on her face one day when he had been reading aloud that passage of his poetic phantasy where the passionate, earthly man pours out his storm of hopeless love for the maiden, who is only a creature made of "such stuff as dreams are made of," and not for him of live hopes and live aims and mortal pains and passions. Cleon looked up and saw that her eyes were wide open under their bent brows, and burning with dry longing. There was the sharpness of regret in that burning look. He threw down the manuscript and leaned towards her. "You are not happy—not always. You are deadened. You want something under all this apathy. Why can't you tell me?"

She looked uncertainly at him and her hesitation mingled with a higher flaring up of that want that had kindled in her eyes.

"I was," she cried out desperately, "I was happy. I did not imagine I could ever have another wish."

"And now you have one?" His voice thrilled with a restrained ecstasy. He read her want between her lashes, and the wonder of it bewildered him.

"Why should it make you unhappy? Why should it not be a new happiness? I am always wanting and needing, but the new want that I have discovered in my heart is the greatest, the most absolute I have ever known—Poppaea—" He let his lips fall suddenly into her hair.

"Oh, no!" She started up and put out her hand frightenedly. "I love you," he said. "Oh—my—Lord!" She turned and threw her face downward on her folded arms and burst into sobs.

He drew back and looked at her in wonder. He had scarcely imagined her capable of such feeling.

"What is it? Tell me what it is?"

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She raised herself and turned her eyes towards him. There was a sudden lightening of hope—of something like intense resolve in them.

"Promise me that you will not mention this again for two—three weeks. Then I will tell you—then I will know if—if there is any hope for us."

Her wild ways astonished him.

"Won't you go now? I am suffering—I am going to try—oh heaven, it will be so hard! You will know then how much—"

"You do love me." He would have taken her hands, but she sprang off the other side of the couch.

"I will not tell you anything yet. There is a trial to be made. Do you pray? do you believe in it? Then pray for me. I will need it—it is like death they say—but with such a reward in view—" She came to him, a radiant smile on her lips. "You cannot understand me, can you?" she said, her love overflowing her eyes and seeming to envelop him and draw him to her heart. "You will—we will have no secrets. No—not yet: if—I fail—I cannot fail when, when"—her voice trembled with her stirred emotion—"when I remember," she finished softly.

"I do not understand, but I trust you, and I do pray for you, if you are going to try and get our happiness for us. But you will tell me—"

"Yes, I will tell you sometime; go now."

He could see that she was enduring physical pain. Her face was pale and her hands twitched.

"Will you stay away two weeks and trust me all the time, and know I am trying? oh, please go!"

"I am going. I will trust you. God bless you—Poppaea."

"Don't call me that; Fulvia, I would rather—"

"Good bye, Fulvia."

He went away, his brain in a whirl of wonder.

(To be concluded in January.)

THE FLIGHT.

ETHELWYN WETHERALD.

A moth for a moment in my fingers

Fled to the great black night;

Only a little dust outlingers

All that went in the flight.

Of dearer wings has the night bereft me,

Out they fled in the gust,

And of the close-held life is left me

Only a little dust.



TO A SKELETON.

WILLIAM REED DUNROY.

If I could clothe thy naked bones with flesh,
And give to thee the breath of life once more,
If I could call thy soul from out the vast
Mysterious realms where now it roams or sleeps,
I wonder if thou'dst smile or frown at me?
For who may tell from what lethean calm
Or yet what sleep of ravishing dreams
I'd waken thee? And if thy lips should break
The long-continued silence of the past,
And speak to me, I wonder what first word
Would strike the eager listening of mine ear?
I wonder if the questions I have asked
Through many weary years would answered be?
If thou wouldst tell me, the ones I loved
Who left me long ago were waiting me
In some fair land beyond the mists and dark,
Or yet were wrapped in some deep sleep that naught
Should ever break? But oh! thou answerest not;
Unbroken silence dost thou hold to me,
As though thou hadst a hideous secret locked
Beyond my longing reach. Though I should hang
Rich gems, and gold, and robes of silk and lace
Upon thine awful form; though I should heap
A glittering treasure at thy feet, yet thou
Wouldst never ope thy rigid jaws to speak.
Away, thou hateful figure, from my sight!
Thou art a fearful thing that ever stands
To tell me, I at last must stare and grin
In hideous silence at a questioning world.

A PYTHAGOREAN.

SAMUEL BISPHAM KOONS.

Long since, when Pierian muses dwelt on earth,
And woodlands echoed with the dryads' mirth,
When fauns and satyrs reveled in wanton glee
Unto the good god Pan's sweet minstrelsy;
Then thou wast Amaryllis, thou the fair
Ausonian maid, who lingered often where
Cicalas sang in the acacia tree,
And ceaseless murmured the Sicilian sea.
O then I loved thee, in those halcyon days,
From roseate morn until the purple haze
Crept over snow-capped Etna, and the breath
Of Eolus was stilled to hush of death.
The simple neatherds piped a plaintive lay
Unto their hillside kine at close of day.
Thy cheeks are autumn apples, Amaryllis,
And sweeter far than honey is thy kiss.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE'S PROSE.

BY WALTER BLACKBURN HARTE.

One of the most even and delightful prose writers in contemporary English literature is Richard Le Gallienne. As all readers who are interested in the economy and, as it were, the social interior of a literary era, even of their own, are aware, Mr. Le Gallienne belongs to the interesting and significant little group of poets and prose writers, more or less associated by some common interests and aims in literature, that is largely identified with the beatific fortunes and history of The Bodley Head.

Mr. Le Gallienne represents in contemporary English letters a certain phase of a revised Euphuism—with this difference: he strips the common things of life of their sordid trappings of old custom and shows them in the light of the poet's vision of life. This is a Euphuism against which the soberest realist cannot offer a word, but Euphuism with something of Latin love of the physical and musical affinity of words as simple style alone. In Le Gallienne's pages we get the poet's contentment in his own world of dreams, and the passion for beauty. But breathing throughout his work is an atmosphere of perfect freedom of fancy and whimsical speculation that is essentially the heritage of modern liberalism in other fields of thought. It is true, he stands more for freedom of the imagination, which is very necessary after the long divorce of imaginative literature from life, than for the larger freedom of social and speculative thought. But his wit and humor is the solvent of old established prejudice, and as an observer of social phenomena in the great whirl of London, he looks at life with his own eyes. And that with a poet insures original and independent views. It is the only new thing under the sun—what a new poet sees in life. This freeing of the imagination, a return to something of the old Elizabethan fervor of poetic vision and expression, is part of the general movement for absolute freedom of thought and criticism in every department of intellectual effort. Art for art's sake means ultimately that life belongs to art in all its phases, social, natural, and psychological; and art belongs to life, and not simply to a remote and unreal region of moral distraction.

A writer of the force of character and native talent, uncorrupted by conformity to the traditions and conventions of English thought, of Richard Le Gallienne contributes greatly to the general trend of tendency for complete freedom of thought by taking the full license of a fantastic fancy. He has no profound philosophy of life, and no great social or moral purpose, but he is serious and in earnest, and true to himself, his talent and experiences. In this way, a free fancy playing over the lighter social follies and prejudices of ancient thought and antiquated social customs and compacts, smooths the path of the profounder revolutionaries of thought, who shall put into words and thoughts the very heart of life, so long interdicted in literature. This is what we sorely need—the libera-

tion of the fancy, imagination, and observation in our tongue to bring poetry to earth and to give our Anglo-Saxon race the same latitude and spiritual significance in its record of experience which is the possession of other literatures of Europe.

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Le Gallienne occupies at this moment an almost unique place in contemporary English literature, and his work is especially typical of the essentially modern ideal of unfettered speculation. Of whatever worth, these are the thoughts and fancies of an individual observer and thinker, and not the echoes of established social conventions and dubious creeds and opinions. That they are witty and whimsical does not lessen their potency. Le Gallienne is a man of letters, pure and simple. His repute and standing is not due to his eminence in learning, or to any polyglot performances in criticism, or to the common and factitious importance attached to obvious fiction. He has achieved a reputation, which has gradually extended from the keen appreciation of the few to such acceptance by the many as enables him to devote his life to literature. This has been achieved in the domain of pure literature, and without the assistance of any of the adventitious circumstances which are commonly employed nowadays to force popular attention.

In poetry, Le Gallienne is one of the interesting minor poets, without, I think, there being much dubiety as to any future sudden emergence into actual greatness. This gift is genuine, but tenuous, and rather the potentiality of beautiful prose than the actual measure of his faculty and endowment. There is skill, and inspiration as well, in his volumes of verse—"English Poems" and "Robert Louis Stevenson and Other Verses"; and they contain many poems breathing thought as well as music. Some of the poems, of an avowedly personal nature, imbued with the ring of real experience, are strong and stirring, and possess the life of sincerity. But in the view of the present writer, it is in his prose he excels, in both his cunning art of expression and in his range of thought; though it is perhaps only fair to say that he reaches the topmost pitch of sincere passion and feeling in some of the poems frankly dealing with incidents in his own experience.

On the whole, however, the body of his prose possesses more of the elements of permanence in it, and is the more distinctly valuable literature.

Perhaps Le Gallienne's greatest, certainly his most unapproachable and inalienable, charm for the reader who reads for solace and recreation, and not for the indulgence of intellectual criticism, is the fact that he so palpably weaves into every line he writes the very texture of the world of reality and imagination he lives in, the real color and preoccupations of his mind, his actual life and experiences—all the complexity of the moral drama which makes up living and doing for the reflective, thinking, modern man. Over all, of course, is the glamor of an imagination which takes fire at every poetic suggestion; but, like all true fantasists and all true humorists, Le Gallienne finds his unfailing inspiration in the midst of life. And, since in modern life adventures are out of

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vogue, except in the police court, this prose poet finds, with others, that a very narrow round of human existence provides an almost inexhaustible fund of material for his light sweep of minor chords and fancies. Here, too, is the stuff of comedy and tragedy, intermixed, as it is so apt to be in life, and Le Gallienne's cheerful chronicling is occasionally colored with a touch of melancholy. But, on the whole, he is the cheerful and not too logical or inquiring philosopher of pleasure—though he affects the higher pleasures.

This suits a mood which must often come to us all in this best of all possible worlds—a desire to escape, or, since that is impossible, to dream a little longer in the tender twilight of an incomplete and unreasoned comprehension of the facts, that shuts out the final irony that the purposes of God and Nature are quite as morally dubious as those of mankind. It is inexorably true, however, that in the heart of life alone can any poet find the elements of fantasy; and so we need not be surprised to discover that all Le Gallienne's prose fancies have an anchor to windward in the mundane sphere of London Town, though he ventures, in his recent collection of "Prose Fancies," to the Moon itself, and seems at home there. The best that literature can do for us is to blend the elements of love and hope in life with the fine hazards of make-believe.

He is, from a lack of sympathy, strangely indifferent to the opening world of new and startling fancies, which lurk in the background of some imaginations as they read the facts and speculations of modern science. But he has a keen vision for the eternally poetic elements in life, no matter how grotesque and gigantic the grim towers of iron and pitiless utilitarianism shall become in our modern Babylon; and this fact alone makes him an important influence in the molding of the imaginative literature of the opening century. In spite of all dolorous prophecy, the written thoughts of men must still hold the stir and passion of the poet's clear vision of the rights of the soul in life.

The idealist sheds something of the radiance of the inner life of the spirit over the sordid externals of our bitter life of the senses in the pinch of social circumstances. This is the end of Le Gallienne's art, and it gives us some moments of illusion. So, in his own fashion, he serves the highest utility.

At the first glance a good proportion, perhaps the preponderance, of all Le Gallienne's prose seems to exist rather for the exercise of his exquisite gift of style than for the sake of emptying his mind. He is one of the few contemporary writers who feel and know the color and subtle elasticity of the English language, used as the old Euphuists (including Shakespeare, who surely felt to the full the glamor of fine and sometimes gaudy words) used it, with the glow of new thought upon it, without any purist qualms about its origin, so long as it inhered in the language, poetry, and life of the race. This is a constant temptation to try perilous feats in writing beautifully about nothing—or, as Dean Swift did, in derision of mere fine writing, on a broomstick. Perhaps some of Le Gallienne's whimsicalities are a little willful, and do not sug-

gest, as it seems whimsicality should, the underlying sobriety of intention and serious thought, which hints at some serious purpose and gives style and humor their point, illumination, and effectiveness. But if one finds one has read without gain of new ideas or mental awakening, one can not but be conscious of a delicious tantalization, such as one receives from some beautiful woman, in all the glamor of dainty and fragrant silks and laces, who fires the old joys of life in one's heart, and then leaves us curiously consoled for the stab of her swift passing.

The very tenuity of the theme may recommend it to the confident magician of words, who sometimes delights in gaining your admiration for his perilous perfection, with the odds against his art. This delightful trifling is one of the most difficult things in the world to excel in, and whether it is worth the immense labor and great talent necessary for anything better than the most dismal failure, is a matter that only taste and temperament can decide. It is certain, however, that there is a mood in the intellectual life of all—that is, all who feel the fascination of literature as the highest expression of the mind's craving for the balm of beauty—when one desires with all the strength of nature to give one's self again to delusive day-dreams and lose the sense of perplexity in life and thought in a poet's cobweb of fancies, touching and transforming the life of the senses with the light of the spirit.

So, after all, Le Gallienne's apparent irrelevance to any of the sober purposes of thought is only the subtler way of a meditative mind, with no panacea or philosophy for life's natural ills to offer, to throw over the imaginations of the poor barbarians of civilization something of the spell and glamor which really exist in life. The absolute consciousness of humanity must persist in spite of all the damned perversities of social usurpation; and so in literature, at least, the appeals of the primal forces of love and beauty can never be wholly in vain.

Le Gallienne has touched upon some of the superficial aspects of modern life, which many have learned to regard with the callous indifference given to the unavoidable commonplace, and invested them with the stir of the ancient and eternal passion and beauty of the inner life that lies beneath all fortuitous social and moral appearances. His veriest trifling, his lightest, his most whimsical and illogical, tangential spins into the thin air of sheer fantasy, are shot through with one potent element of permanence and charm—perhaps the most precious in literature, the poetic insight which is essentially humane and enriches the memory with the ideal joys of life. On the whole, the total impression of his prose volumes—"The Book Bills of Narcissus," "The Religion of a Literary Man," and "Prose Fancies"—is that of one of the finest and most humane spirits in literature. These pages are filled with a sentiment so rare and delicate in contemporary literature as to be almost unique. In an age when we are ashamed of our best emotions, Le Gallienne has the audacity and courage to introduce them into the web and woof of his thought.

RICHARD
LE GALLIENNE'S
PROSE.

He shows that sentiment is the consoling element in real life, and therefore the legitimate property of literature. Sometimes, it seems, he is a trifle extravagant, but he is always sincere and never crude. Moreover, Laurence Sterne, the greatest of sentimentalists in literature, is a precedent to quote. We could not wish either Sterne or Le Gallienne less sentimental without robbing them of their charm.

In this time, when literature is losing some of its dignity and its intrinsic beauty,—always the element of permanence and immemorial influence,—such work as Le Gallienne's, which embodies the native opinions and impressions of a free and open mind in a beauty of style that almost makes literature, with or without thought, is a wholesome example to writers of purpose not to forget the potency of beauty. Le Gallienne has put the spirit of humanity into the so-called "humanities." He has shown that the fastidiousness of Euphuism is quite compatible with the treatment of the things of the imagination in the thick of life. This should be appreciated at its full value. Literature can never retain its character as literature, if it becomes a mere crude record of facts untouched and unlighted by their inherent spiritual significance, or if it forfeits the art of selection which gives us the truth of facts and beauty too.

The uses of the fancy and beauty and the treasures of the imagination are as legitimate and undeniable as the public schools—only their influence is more subtle and insinuating, and they awaken in the cynical and sceptical, who have grown chill in the buffetings of the world, a certain mood of relenting tenderness that logic and political economy and philosophy can not stir.

Le Gallienne's books take their place, as they appear, among the books that one reads in moods when one desires a refuge from all the deadly dullness of sordid existence. They are the books that the dilettante, who is, perhaps, the one genuine, unfailing type of the constant book-lover, takes down from the shelf most frequently.



BUBBLE AND SQUEAK.

A VERACIOUS CHRONICLE OF
INDIVIDUAL CRITICISM AND COMMENT.



HERE is a very dear friend of mine who follows literature, or thinks and says he does. And he would have made such an ideal nursery-maid.

¶ The undesirable lover does not send his dear one candies and flowers, but simply his verses.

¶ I should like to remind a certain professed lover of mankind, who does the philanthropic racket in literature, that a spendthrift of the emotions is not such a deep delusion as he imagines. With all one's better feelings capitalized for revenue only, that a bankruptcy is imminent in any financial stringency.

¶ People who don't get religion to-day, get "literature."

¶ If Anthony Comstock could only be arrested for his dreams!—and some other people.

¶ Why do all orthodox people denounce Wit under all sorts of moral disguises? Because wit is the death of orthodoxy. If they are even seen in company, we know the piety is but hypocrisy. A priest who has wit is really an unconfessed agnostic, and a good fellow over a glass of wine and a profane book.

¶ A pinch of philosophy—the smallest pinch will suffice, for too much is perilous—and some sense of humor will cure one of being a total pessimist. So does a good cook. The thing is to take the world as a badly cooked dinner, and be thankful for appetite and "fixin's."

¶ At this moment in comes Le Gallienne's latest book, the "Prose Fancies," in a second series. This is essentially a book that depends entirely for its success upon its delicacy of fancy and beauty of style, and its success will be in large measure. The author has given us the fruits of his care-free, whimsical hours, the happy fancies of moods as remote from the wearisome world as London is from Arcady, and we should be grateful for the relief of such dreaming. There are one or two half serious papers in the book, with some individual and sober opinions, but the perennial charm of the book is its sustained power of original and poetic fancy. A good deal of it is the sentimental view of things, but since there is so little sentiment in modern life we are not likely to

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be upset in our mental balance by a trifle of over-emphasis here. This is a book for one's leisure—with the to-morrow of the world postponed.

It contains "A Seventh-Story Heaven," "Spring by Parcels Post," "The Great Merry-go-round," "The Burial of Romeo and Juliet," "Variations upon Whitebait," "A Seaport in the Moon," "The Dramatic Art of Life," and a dozen or more other papers with titles as piquant, filled with fancies which are something fresh and new in contemporary literature, written in a style that is a reminder of the inerrancy of Lamb.

The book, as is usual with Le Gallienne's work, carries with it the distinction of The Bodley Head imprint, but an edition is published in this country by H. S. Stone & Co., which is physically a beautiful production in the book-making art. The covers by Frank Hazenplug make it a very attractive and dainty possession for the lover of beautiful books, both inside and out, and the typography pleases the eye.

So far our American publishers of the *belles-lettres* display their good taste and some rational belief in making an appeal to the better informed elements in the community. But their discernment is rather exclusively a matter of physical satisfaction. In their independent attempts to inform the spirit of literature, they simply flounder into the fatuity of putting slang and Slum life into the shape of permanence. In the choice of a good proportion of their literature they depend upon the judgment of infallible brethren across the water, and they cannot possibly err in reprinting such books as "Prose Fancies."

But if any American writer produced such work, there is not a single publisher in America with enough appreciation of what constitutes literature, or enough belief in pure literature as a commercial venture, to touch it. As these papers are avowedly light and on the surface, they would fall out of the conventional category of the American publisher's conception of *belles-lettres* (home made). As they are not fiction—there's not even a toss-up about it—they would be damned forthwith. I suppose we must thank God catholicity of criticism is more common in London; but, unfortunately, human nature can not learn to altogether enjoy being stifled here.

¶ If the banal jocularly of a certain periodical published in East Aurora is an indication (and of course it must be) of the sort of literary atmosphere and ideals to be found in the advertised ten-dollar essay on John Ruskin and Turner the artist, then the purchasers at ten dollars are to be sincerely commiserated in their moral and intellectual squalor.

When Ruskin, in his heyday of growing fame, was writing his works, one could only buy them in London at a guinea apiece, as he put on his own price, paid his own printer, and only appealed to the few. But I think he would perceive the ludicrousness of ten dollars for The Pastor of the Philistines on Ruskin. It taxes credulity, but there it is in sober black and white.

Perhaps one could satisfy the hunger for art criticism just as well by buying a complete set of Ruskin in a pirated edition at a department store for a dollar ninety-three. But then one would lose the Hubbard illuminations, and when "genius" is shrewd enough to ask a big price it is its own guarantee.

In the ratio of price the Philistine prophet on Ruskin, and other things, is the most stupendous of modern authors.

¶ Our contemporary, "The Western College Magazine," in common with a good many other critics with more valid claims to old-fogyism, is self-complacently severe upon the Bibelot movement in periodical literature. It says in a recent issue: "The literary garden is being overrun with rag-weeds in the form of miniature magazines. This bilious outburst of disordered sentiment in the form of red and yellow covered pamphlets . . . Their tone is melancholy, and their typical stories are vague, inconsistent, bombastic ravings."

Other wiseacre critics have expressed practically the same superior scorn of the development of pamphlet literature. They are moved by the spirit which moves all small souls to bow in cringing meanness to all established and prosperous people and institutions, however intellectually and morally insignificant and fatuous, and take it out in lofty contempt of everything and everybody they conceive to be handicapped, at a disadvantage, and therefore out of the running altogether.

This air of superiority is a little irritating to any one who knows what fustian mere respectability is in literature—whatever it may be in commercial and social circles. It is not the weight of the opinion of such perfunctory critics, but they have so many more mouths than the handful of peculiar people who cherish a penchant for truth and independent decisions. This crushing snobbery toward all independent thinkers who may wish to seek the suffrages of the public in their own fashion, since there is a taboo on all independent opinion and individual craftsmanship in our conventional domestic picture-book literature, is just on a par with the British provincialism that makes wholesale trade ennobling and righteous, and retail trade the depth of iniquity.

I take up this instance of cheap smartness in our neighbor because I have lost track of many other cases of arrant prejudice, or something worse, I had collected to burn in one heap. This case is as typical as any, and will serve as a text for the common-sense rebuttal of all this wholesale condemnation.

To begin with, the writer of this "Bubble and Squeak" is not in any sense a decadent or a degenerate, and yet he is distinctly interested in this revival of the old pamphleteering. Common sense declares both decadence and degeneration are imaginary evils, and what is usually stamped as degeneration is usually merely the demand for freedom of inquiry and discussion. Then we are solemnly informed that the pamphleteers and their efforts are all mad, trivial, puny, and puerile. We can afford to admit that many of them, the bulk of them, are as lacking in serious intention and character as is claimed.

That is largely true; but it is no reason why an opprobrious character for lunacy should be fastened in this irresponsible fashion; without proper examination, upon the whole of such an interesting movement in literature as this chap-book revival. It is not simply narrow-mindedness, it is the height of ignorant illogic, and it looks suspiciously like the animus of a Cloture—the Tories in literature.

To avoid a waste of words, since argument is out of the question in dealing with merely silly and intolerant animosity, I will put the whole matter into a perfectly literal statement of the facts as common sense views them.

This, then, is the situation: There have existed in this country within the past few decades a great number of newspapers and periodicals. Some of the newspapers, as everybody knows, were and are good, if you agree with their politics. Some—a very few exceptions—were especially remarked for their conservative tone, carefulness, accuracy, and general level of intelligent commentary. Some had a slight leaning to the encouragement of the arts and literature—so long as they were conducted genteelly and on highly moral grounds. Horace Greeley was the first to encourage literature in the press in America. Other papers of good repute are familiar to all interested in the contemporary phases of American journalism—"The Times," "The Evening Post," "The Mail and Express," "The Commercial Advertiser," and others, like "The Boston Transcript," in a few other large cities.

The roll of respectable and well-conducted newspapers in the United States is really a lamentably short one, but this bibelot has no space to spare even for such a golden record of American intellectual achievement.

It can hardly be claimed we have excelled other people in reputable journalism. The most we can boast is a few respectable journals have held their own in decent mediocrity. But in the development of sheer imbecility and sensational vulgarity the pre-eminent examples of the American press have eclipsed all nations.

The logical-minded reader will perceive, therefore, that there are good papers and bad and silly and immoral ones.

So in the field of periodical literature. There are what are called the "good magazines"—made up of innocuous but obstructive literature—and there are the bad and vulgar periodicals, which obtain a million readers by the methods of the worst newspapers. So there are silly—but seldom vicious, or wantonly debauching—bibelots, and some good ones.

There is no reason on earth why wit and wisdom and fancy are not as good in a small and handy pamphlet as in a bulky literary sandwich magazine—of 136 pages of dubiously varied matter and 1,000 pages of "ads." This is the parallel that persons of discernment will be apt to consider in this clear light. An invasion of openness of mind is what is wanted in American criticism.

¶ We were sitting on a suburban veranda, apropos of a discussion of the fascination of a poetic existence in Arcadia.

In the country the mind is freer and life is calmer, said the idealist. Ah! but the joys of sophistication are enough.

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We poor sophisticated worldlings, in commiserating ourselves upon the spiritual sorrows of enlightenment and culture, envy the simple joys of the contented poor, but we can not share them. In the round of breakfast, dinner, supper, and the usual gossip, they become the burden of the imprisoned spirit.

¶ According to the Society of American Authors' report, made public in New York at an Authors' Dinner (it seems some authors annually vary the monotony of just eating by dining), there are twenty thousand persons engaged in literature in the United States. Of these, the report declares, one-fourth can be styled men and women of letters. If this were only true, it would be untempered tragedy. But, of course, the fact is the American authors in this society are much more irresistibly and divinely called to the art of dining than to the art of writing. There is not a baker's dozen of men and women in America who can follow literature as a profession. There is an even smaller number who can be thought of as men of letters. As far as the multitude of writers is concerned, the Society's report only includes those who dine. There are others.

¶ It seems that all our esthetic art is to come from the Slums, since the democratic dawn has fairly dawned in a blaze of new and original intellectual vigor. Any work of fiction that looks for serious consideration must be written in the vernacular of the towheaded little pagan of modern civilization, the street boy, newsboy, and degenerate and thief of five years up.

There is no moral purpose in these pictures of moral deformity. It is simply the picturesqueness of the Slum language, the piquant shock of these infant hoary-heads and their cynicism and morality, which these writers seek. It is so excruciatingly humorous, they think, and their critics and publishers agree with them.

Civilization is hard up for some wholesome subject of mirth when it has to go to the East Side of New York to find the ludicrous. The ugly and horrible is plentiful. The grim irony of the lives of these stunted, deformed, little barbarians, and their rasping greed and cynicism among themselves, is not at all humorous to any one with a sense of true humor. Such "literature" merely blunts charity and the moral sense of responsibility; and, moreover, books of mere slang are an entire impertinence in the domain of art.

¶ The latest imbecility in New York journalism, which has about reached the level of preposterousness, is The Yellow Kid. The aphorisms of The Yellow Kid, who is the *pièce de résistance* of two Sunday rival editions, are to the point. "Ter beat de band! See?" "We're in it! See?"—and so the great and irresistible democracy of wit is upheld, and popular education is justified, and put to its proper test and use.

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¶ There is a strange fatality about elevated sentiments that makes them appeal solely to the Great Unwashed. They are propagated with vociferous tin horns.

¶ When our vanity has dwindled down in the wear and tear of life, and finally gets snuffed out, we become the disillusioned.

¶ A good opinion of one's self is necessary to support existence. In Grub Street everybody has written Shakespeare's fine things—or words to the same effect.

¶ In a conventional review of a volume of verse, the other day, I read this interesting verdict. The book is a collection of simple love-songs, and the author is a woman; and this is what the critic wrote: "While they deal with love for the most part, it is a *clean, healthy* passion." From this it would appear some of the immaculate critics of respectability regard love as a *dirty* passion.

¶ When "Current Literature" was started, in 1888, it at once attracted the attention of everybody interested or engaged in contemporary periodical literature. To include probably the most important element in "Current Literature's" large and appreciative public, one must understand that the term "periodical literature" here comprehends the whole of newspaperdom. There were already one or two eclectic periodicals in the field, but they simply reprinted articles from the old English reviews, and "Current Literature" at once occupied a place unique among English and American periodicals. Its aim was to give a comprehensive survey of all the significant, not simply or even primarily the popular, literature of the time, as sifted over in every month and literary season. But the most important and, as we think, novel and valuable feature of the original publication was its introduction of a critical drag-net through the deep and turbid tide of American journalism. Out of this sea of a million sheets, born before the dawn, to die at evening, the drag-net found under the light of the moon a great deal of golden treasure that shimmered with unmistakable light of true fantasy and imagination. So "Current Literature" was made up largely of genuine and unusual literature from obscure and unexpected sources, and it seemed at last that some one had hit upon a practical idea for gathering and focusing the elements of an original literature in America. The periodical was under the editorship of William George Jordan, and it is due to his enthusiasm, fine critical discernment, care, and discrimination that the magazine has attained its present significance and character in literature. He has now resigned the editorship and will devote himself to original literary work and to lecturing on his system of mental training. A great many of the younger writers, who were unearthed and introduced to a literary and critical public entirely through Mr. Jordan's wide catholicity of taste and sympathy, will regret he is no longer at the helm of a periodical which, under his direction, has done so much for the promotion of American literature.

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